

Save Foggy Bottom...It's Where We Live!

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Interested in becoming a member of the FBA? Just mail your name, address, e-mail and phone number to: Foggy Bottom Association (Membership), Suite

195, 2560 Virginia Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20037. Please enclose \$15 for annual dues, made out to "Foggy Bottom Association." (Dues for full-time college students are \$5.) Questions? Contact Ed Gable, Membership Director, 202-333-0512 or edwardbgable@aol.com.

KEY MAY MEETINGS

See next page for a listing of key community meetings this month.

Zoning Commission Slates GW Hearings; ANC Votes to Have Community's Views Heard

The D.C. Zoning Commission last month agreed to hear GWU's plans for rezoning its campus, while at the same time not taking any community comments into considering whether to "set down" the issue for a hearing.

The commission set four dates in September to hear the school's plans: Sept. 14, 21, 25 and 28.

Meanwhile, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A voted at its monthly meeting April 19 to have comments by ANCs and other community entities (such as the FBA) be taken into consideration at such set-down hearings.

FBA members protested the



Making a Statement: FBA members and supporters brought signs to the Zoning Commission's April 20 meeting. — Photo: FBN

Zoning Commission's refusal to take written comments from the ANC in particular in such cases, bringing signs to the April 20 hearing.

ZC Chairman Carol Mitten said at the hearing that oral testimony is not permitted at such set-down hearings, but that community views will be able to be heard during the public hearings to be held on GW's rezoning.

FBA Files Suit Against City Agencies in Challenge to GW's Rezoning Plans

The FBA filed suit last week against several city agencies, claiming the city is improperly letting George Washington University proceed with zoning changes the FBA said would "substantially alter the historic character of Foggy Bottom."

The suit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia on April 24, notes that the university's new development plans for its campus — including Square 54, the school's former hospital site — would, among other things, violate environmental regulations, be in violation of GW's own campus plan limits on student enrollment numbers and the school's current campus plan still has almost four years to run.

FBA President Joy Howell, speaking at the FBA's monthly meeting the evening the suit was

filed, said the university was in violation of its own campus plan limiting the number of students.

Not About the Students

Howell emphasized that the FBA was not at odds with the school's students. "We like the vibrancy and the balance in the community the students bring.... What we would like to see is a responsible plan for growth," Howell said.

"Over the past two decades, GW has expanded its presence in Foggy Bottom in an unprecedented scale," the suit reads. The school's "aggressive expansion... threatens to transform this neighborhood from a predominantly residential area to an extensively commercially zoned university campus."

The suit names the following city agencies as defendants: Office of Planning, Zoning Commission, Health Department, Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, Historic Preservation Review Board and the Public

Schools Department.

PUDs, Piecemeal Zoning

During discussion at FBA meeting, ANC 2A Commissioner Michael Thomas said that GW's zoning plans for planned unit developments — also known as PUDs, they allow exemptions to applicable zoning regulations — would effectively zone the school's entire campus in a piecemeal way.

"Everything will be rezoned on property that is not residential," he said, with zoning effectively raised from residential to commercial levels.

The suit also claims that GW's plans to develop on Square 80 around the city's School Without Walls (see *FBN*, 4-5) and take a parcel of land from the city there "seeks to diminish the historical character of the [SWW] and the Public Schools' sale of the parcel of land... undermine[s] the authority of the Office of Planning and the Zoning Commission."

— FBN

FBA President Joy Howell praised the ANC's vote, which was unanimous.

"The law requires that the ANC be given 'great weight' in planning and zoning matters, and that means up front in the process rather than after the application has momentum," she said.

"This sets an alarming precedent for all universities in town, and all ANC's should be concerned about it," she added.

— FBN

Mendelson Says Special Ops Division on Square 37 May Face Development

The Special Operations Division police station at 23rd and L Streets in the West End could be up for redevelopment, D.C. Council member Phil Mendelson (D-At Large) told the FBA at its monthly meeting last week.

Mendelson, who chairs the

council's Judiciary Committee which has oversight of the station, said he "wouldn't be surprised" if pending plans for any development of the city-owned station was tied in with the city's plans to redevelop libraries, including the West End Branch Library, which also sits

on the same block, Square 37. (See *FBN*, 2-8.)

Residents on Square 37 — including from the Tiverton apartments and the Gibson condominiums — with the help of the FBA and ANC-2A, help beat

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THE FOGGY BOTTOM NEWS

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The Foggy Bottom News is published by the Foggy Bottom Association as a service to its members and provides information on FBA and neighborhood news, programs, activities and other events of interest to FBA members. Contributions and story ideas are welcome, but the FBN reserves the right to edit or hold pieces as space requires.

The Foggy Bottom Association was formed by a group of citizens in 1955 and was formally incorporated in 1959. Attendance at FBA meetings is open to all residents of Foggy Bottom and the West End.

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Mendelson Says...

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back a plan to upzone Square 37 to a higher-density zoning classification less than two years ago.

"I don't know if it would be an RFP or what," Mendelson said afterward, referring to a possible request for proposals for any redevelopment of the square.

Rent Control Still at Fore

The council member, who is facing a tough re-election fight this fall, also said he backed strong rent control efforts being led by Council member Jim Graham (D-Ward One). Graham gave an overview of his rent-control efforts at the FBA's February meeting. (See FBN, 3-8.)

"I don't want to see rent control gutted," Mendelson said.

A vote was scheduled for this week but Mendelson said that Graham was still struggling to get enough votes to get an acceptable version of his rent control bill to the full council.

"It was a complete shock"

when versions of Graham's bill did not get enough votes to make the full council previously, Mendelson said. He said he did not think an alternative version of rent control, which would means-test renters, would be a good idea.

"That would put landlords in the position of verifying tenants' income," he said.

He also said the city's budget being debated includes two tax increases, which the council opposes. One is a restoration of the deed and recordation tax of 1.5%, while the other is a doubling of the city's 911 emergency-services tax of 76 cents per phone line per month, proposed by Mayor Williams.

Kreuzer May File Another Appeal

Also at the FBA meeting, Dr. Donald Kreuzer, who recently lost a three-year court fight against GWU over the school's

building a dorm abutting his 23rd Street property, said he would likely appeal the ruling the full D.C. Court of Appeals.

While he said he was not particularly optimistic about the full appeals court overturning a three-judge panel's ruling against him, Kreuzer said he felt he had no choice, and thanked the community for its support, while FBA President Joy Howell thanked him for his "courage."

"What's happened to me could happen to everybody" in the neighborhood, Kreuzer said.

— FBN



'Phil'ing in: Council member Phil Mendelson addresses the FBA's April meeting, while FBA President Joy Howell looks on.

— Photo: FBN

Community Meetings This Month

Following is a list of key May meetings of interest to the Foggy Bottom / West End community. Please note that the ANC-2A meeting this month is on a Tuesday. All meetings are in Northwest DC and are free and open to all residents.

Wed., May 3 (tonight), 7 p.m. — Green Spaces for D.C., International Monetary Fund, 720 19th St.

Photo ID Required for Entry. Green Spaces will give updates IMF amenity fund, which will be used for park improvements, tree replacement and new trees, street furniture and tree-box fencing. Green Spaces President Sally Boasberg will moderate.

Mon., May 8, 6:30 p.m. — Square 54 developers' meeting, Westin Grand Hotel, 24th & M Streets. Presentation by Boston Properties and KSI on their development proposals for the

former GWU Hospital site.

Thurs., May 11, 7 p.m. — Kennedy Center Access Improvements and Juarez Circle, GWU Inn, 824 New Hampshire Ave., Room 111.

The Federal Highway Administration will host meeting on proposed work at Juarez Circle.

Mon., May 15, 7 p.m. — Meeting on a Potential West End Historic District, West End Library, 24th & L Streets.

Local resident and D.C. Preservation League volunteer Hayden Wetzel will host a community meeting to discuss the possibility of a historic district in parts of the West End.

Tues., May 16, 7 p.m. — ANC-2A Monthly Meeting, State Plaza Hotel, 2116 F Street.

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A's monthly public meeting; please note change from regular meeting day.

Mon., May 22, 7:30 p.m. — Foggy Bottom Association monthly membership meeting, Melrose Hotel,

2430 Pennsylvania Ave.

Please note meeting is the week before Memorial Day weekend.

Thurs., June 1, 6 p.m. — Comprehensive Plan Presentation, WVSA/SAIL Public Charter School, 1100 16th St.

The D.C. Office of Planning will provide an update on their efforts related to the proposed revision / update of the city's Comprehensive Plan.

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